

Who had promised that there  
will be one God, but also the God &  
Father of our children - we beseech thee  
to take them thy dear ones under thy fatherly  
care & protection. Guide & sanctify both in  
body & soul. Bless them thy pearls of childhood, deliver them  
the temptations of youth, & lead them to a good confession -

Give into thy saints to whom thou hast  
committed this blessed host the annies of this  
unfailing presence & care. Guide them

# I AM NOT ASHAMED

... is he who is always a good comrade, for he will  
... his way in the world.

... are of yesterday, yet we have filled your empire, your  
cities, your towns, your islands, your tribes, your camps,  
castles, palaces, assemblies and senate."

More than any other element in human experience, Christ-  
ianity has made for the (intellectual) advance of man in  
reducing languages to writing, creating literatures, pro-  
moting education... It has been the largest single fac-  
tor in combating on a worldwide scale such ancient foes of  
man as war, disease, famine, and the exploitation of one  
race by another... This it has done by a power inherent  
within it of lifting lives from selfishness and defeat...  
to fellowship with the eternal God."

Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I  
preached unto you... that Christ died for our sins..."

2, 15, 3

Being a lover of freedom, when the revolution came in  
Germany I looked to the universities to defend it...but no,  
the universities immediately were silenced. Then I looked  
to the great editors...but they were silenced in a few  
short weeks.... Only the church stood squarely across the  
path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth... The  
church alone had the courage and persistence to stand for  
intellectual truth and moral freedom.. I am forced to  
confess that what I once despised I now praise unreserved-  
ly."

Jesus, and shall it ever be, A mortal man ashamed of Thee?  
Ashamed of Thee, whose angels praise, whose glories shine thro'  
endless days.

Ashamed of Jesus, sooner far Let evening blush to own a star  
He sows the seeds of light divine O'er this benighted soul  
of mine

Ashamed of Jesus that dear Friend, On whom my hopes of  
heaven depend  
No; when I blush, be this my shame, That I no more revere His  
name

Ashamed of Jesus, yes, I say, when I've no guilt to wash away  
no tear to wipe, no good to crave, no fears to quell, no  
soul to save.

Till then, nor is my boasting vain, Till then I boast a  
Saviour slain;

And O, may this my glory be, That Christ is not ashamed of me.

*Empty pride! I'll boast a Saviour crucified*

Text: Romans 1:16. "I am not ashamed of the gospel"

Topic: I AM NOT ASHAMED

Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." But why wasn't he? He should have been, shouldn't he? The gospel was a ridiculous thing for a Roman to be preaching, and after all, Paul was a Roman. I can imagine old Cato exploding if he had lived to hear it, "What nonsense--this love and weakness and humility and turning the other cheek! Rubbish for slaves or for women, but for Romans. And look at its god--a common Jew who died like a thief!"

As a Roman, Paul should have completely rewritten the gospel. He might have used Hitler's version, for Rome and Nazi Germany had much in common. For the beatitude, "Blessed are the meek," he might have substituted Hitler's, "Happy is he who is always a good comrade; he will make his way in the world." That was Rome's attitude, self-sufficient, powerful. Rome's standards were the eagle; its symbols the axe and the short sword, not the cross. Rome wanted victory, not sacrifice; it wanted power, not weakness.

But Rome listened to Paul when he said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." Why? Perhaps because he added, "--for it is the power of God unto salvation." It was that word power that caught Roman ears, for Rome knew that power and worshiped it. But so did Paul, and Rome was soon to see that the power of the gospel was greater than the power of all its legions. Of course Paul was not ashamed. He was a Roman, and a Roman loves power, and the gospel is the power of God.

But that was all 2000 years ago. Now is it with the gospel today? Rome has gone, but the world hasn't changed much. It still worships power. But what about the gospel? Is it still a gospel of power? Are Christians still unashamed of it?

I wonder. A few weeks ago I heard of a church here in North Olden with a church roll of 900, a big church. Then the government asked all Christians to register, and of the 900, only 200 had the courage to stand up and be counted as Christians. Were the rest ashamed?

Everyone seems to be telling us these days that there simply isn't any power in the gospel anymore. It's not even worth persecuting, they say. Just let it die. They're going to take over our Christian educational and medical work, according to one plan I heard, but let our evangelistic work go on. Why? Well, partly because in education and medicine we compete with the government. But I think, underneath, they believe that once Christianity is stripped of its useful functions like education and medicine it will die--die quietly and painlessly and missed by no one. The days of its power are over. Now let us bury it as decently and unobtrusively as possible. It does seem true, sometimes, in our discouraged moments. Tertullian could boast of the Church of the first two centuries, "We are of yesterday, yet we have filled your empire, your cities, your towns, your islands, your tribes, your camps, castles, palaces, assemblies and senate." Today that sounds more like Communism than Christianity. Has the power really gone?

Paul would be thoroughly ashamed of us for thinking like that. If anyone had a right to be discouraged, he did, with his little, struggling churches of drunken Corinthians, and foolish Galatians, and back-biting Philippians. But the gospel--there was his boast, "I am not ashamed of the gospel", and the unchanging gospel has not lost its power, the power of God. It changed Paul's life at Damascus. It is still changing lives. It turned the world upside down. It is still turning the world upside down. It is sheer nonsense to paint the history of the church as one great burst of power that carried it in three short centuries to victory over mighty Rome only to be exhausted in the compromise that followed with a resulting fall and long, slow decline ever since. That general picture is true of every other religion except Christianity--early power and expansion, then slow decay. But Christianity, and Christianity alone has had within it an inner power, a power of

renewal and reform and recreation--the power of God. Where else will you find a religion's greatest century, not in its early enthusiastic years, or its golden age, but centuries later, 2000 years after its birth. It is the century 1815-1914, ~~xxxxxxx~~ not the 1st, or the 13th, which Latourette, in his great History calls "the Great Century." And it is of the gospel today, not then, that he says, "More than any other element in human experience, Christianity has made for the intellectual advance of man in reducing languages to writing, creating literatures, promoting education... It has been the largest single factor in combating on a world-wide scale, such ancient foes of man as war, disease, famine, and the exploitation of one race by another... This it has done by a power inherent within it of lifting lives from selfishness and defeat.....to fellowship with the eternal God." (VII, 480f.)

A "power inherent within it"--I can say today with Paul the Roman, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God."

But Paul was Greek as well as Roman. He was born and raised in the Greek university town of Tarsus. Even if Paul as a Roman might be excused for glorying in the power of the gospel, Paul the Greek should have known better. He should have been more academically detached and objective. The difference between Greek and Roman is always typified to me by Archimedes who was killed in the Roman capture of Syracuse. In the looting and slaughter that followed the siege, a drunken Roman soldier broke into his garden as he was pondering some ~~abstruse~~ mathematical proposition, but the Greek scientist did not even look up from his meditation as the powerful Roman rushed up and cut off his head with a blow. The Greeks preached ~~moderation~~ self-control, not power. They taught men ~~moderation~~, to choose the golden mean, to walk in the middle of the road, not to lean too far to one side like the Romans. They were cool, critical scientists and philosophers. Their god was wisdom. But here was Paul, neither moderate nor critical nor wise, turning out his life for an incredible gospel, and preaching what he himself admitted was "the foolishness of the cross." He should have been ashamed of his gospel. More than that, he should have been ashamed of his associates, a bunch of rough, rude, unlettered Galileean fishermen who did not even speak good Greek.

He should have been ashamed, but he wasn't. The Greeks <sup>might</sup> ~~should~~ have known why. A Greek doctor named Luke had written them the strange, gripping story of how Paul on the road to Damascus had seen with his own eyes the Risen Lord. Christ arose; Paul had seen Him, and on that fact he staked his life and his gospel. He was preaching no ~~theory~~ theory, no phantom gospel. He was preaching a fact; ~~his was the God of history.~~ And the Greeks, scientists to the last, liked their facts.

There is another reason for Paul's Greek pride in the gospel. This is what he says about it to the church in the Greek city of Corinth: "Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you...that Christ died for our sins....."

With the word "sin" Paul points to a problem that all the wisdom of the Greeks could not solve, ~~the rock against which the philosophies of the world shatter one by one~~, the problem of sin. The Greeks with all their wisdom could not bring peace to the heart of the guilty sinner. Is it any wonder that Paul was proud of the gospel, the only answer to the deepest problem man faces, the problem of evil in human nature. "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation." Paul was preaching the blood of Christ, the only cure in the world for sin, and the "foolishness of the cross" was ~~profounder wisdom than Greece~~ ~~could ever grasp.~~ This was the gospel of the unsearchable riches ~~both of the spirit~~ ~~and of the world of man.~~ Of course Paul was not ashamed.

But a ~~in~~, what about today? After all, Paul lived in superstitious times, when science at its best was rather a crude affair. Didn't he get away with a lot that could never be swallowed today? Surely his gospel isn't intellectually defensible now, in this highly-educated, scientific-minded world.

I think Paul would reply, "Your world loves wisdom no more than did

my Greece, the Greece of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle. <sup>For</sup> But there is still no reason to be ashamed, for the gospel is the power and wisdom of God." I think it was harder for him to stand on Mars Hill and <sup>preach</sup> proudly proclaim the gospel to the ~~conspicuous philosophers of Athens~~, than it is for us to stand before the wise of our day and preach the cross. For now so many of the wise are with us, not against us. I heard a Chicago professor, not a Christian, tell his class that the three greatest intellects of all time were Paul of Tarsus, Sir Isaac Newton, and Einstein. I don't know that that's true, but if we take his word for it, where is there room for intellectual scorn of the gospel. Paul was not ashamed. <sup>Newton was</sup> ~~Newton was certainly not ashamed of being a Christian.~~ He thought that his commentary on the Book of Daniel would live longer than his Principia which brought in the scientific revolution. And as for Einstein, though he is no Christian, listen to this statement of his:

"Being a lover of freedom, when the revolution came in Germany I looked to the universities to defend it...but no, the universities immediately were silenced. Then I looked to the great editors...but they were silenced in a few short weeks.... Only the church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth... The church alone had had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced to confess that what I once despised I now praise unreservedly."

I think we can still say today, with Paul the Greek, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power and wisdom of God."

But we can't stop here, we must go on and finish the pattern, and point out that Paul was more Jew, by far, than either Greek or Roman, and that as a Jew he had even more reason for being ashamed of the gospel. Imagine telling a Jew that the Messiah, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the King of Kings, had come--where?--as a carpenter in Nazareth, a blasphemer, a crucified heretic. Paul was more than ashamed of that gospel. He hated it. He persecuted it.

But of course he changed, and still a Jew, a Pharisee of the Pharisees, says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." <sup>That's the</sup> ~~Here is~~ the real reason for Paul's glory in the gospel. He changed. Saul became Paul; the persecutor became the persecuted; He changed because he discovered that the gospel which he hated was a person whom he could not hate--a person whom he must serve and obey, a person who was his God. <sup>my the's of said the, all good</sup> For Jesus was God--shattering, incredible thought--the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and Paul the Jew could only fall down before Him and worship Him.

This is what the verse really means. The gospel is the good news, and the good news is Christ. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." And this is how the question comes down to us today. Not, "Are you ashamed of the church--ineffective as it may sometimes be." I often am ashamed of it. Not, "Are you ashamed of Christians." Of course I am, I'm ashamed of myself. But "Are you ashamed of Christ."

And with us, as with Paul, that question persistently and relentlessly turns itself around. "Is He ashamed of you."

"Jesus, and shall it ever be, A mortal man ashamed of Thee?  
 "Ashamed of ~~xxxxxx~~ Thee, whom angels praise, Whose glories shine thro endless  
 Ashamed of Jesus, sooner far Let night disown each radiant star.  
 Tis midnight with my soul till he; Bright Morning Star bid darkness flee.  
 Ashamed of Jesus, that dear Friend, On whom my hopes of heaven depend,  
 No; when I blush, be this my shame, That I no more revere His name.  
 Ashamed of Jesus! Empty pride. I'll boast a Saviour crucified.  
 And O, may this my glory be, That Christ is not ashamed of me."

## I AM NOT ASHAMED

- Feb. 1940 - High Street Presb. Ch., Newark, N.J.  
March 1940 - Old First Church, Newark, N.J.  
June 1939 - Ben Luppen  
Aug. 1940 - Bible School, St. Pauls Presb., Los Angeles  
~~Passing on Aug. 1940 (spiritual)~~
- 
- Dec. 1941 - Bible Class, 2nd Ch. Elizabeth, N. J.  
Dec. 1941 - Class Sermon (rewritten)  
Feb. 6, 1944 - First Presb. Ch. Bridgeport, Conn.  
Sept. 18, 1949 - Pelkimp Union Church (rewritten)  
Oct. 2, 1949 - Yonkers 11th St. service  
June, 1950 - Nank. U. Faculty Prayers  
Aug., 1950 - Sharykeri Comm. Church

Samuel H. Moffett  
Class Sermon, Dec. 8

Text: Romans 1:16. "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

Topic: ~~PROUD OF THE GOSPEL~~  
~~PRIDE AND PREJUDICE~~  
ARE YOU ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL?

Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." But why wasn't he? <sup>He should have been, shouldn't he?</sup> ~~He should have been.~~ Others were ashamed of it. <sup>his friend</sup> Demas was, and Demas forsook him. <sup>Paul</sup> We are, <sup>achieved it</sup> today, many times. But Paul wasn't. ~~Everybody knew he wasn't.~~ His burning zeal for the gospel had made headlines in Jerusalem; it had made Roman governors listen spellbound to his proud defense; it even had the philosophers of Athens talking about the new religion from the east which was turning the world upside down. Everybody knew Paul was not ashamed of the gospel. But why wasn't he? He should have been.

The gospel was a ridiculous thing for a Roman to be preaching, and Paul was a Roman. I can imagine <sup>if some of the old Romans</sup> stern old Cato exploding if he had lived to hear it, "What nonsense! <sup>That will never destroy Carthage.</sup> this love and meekness and humility and turning the other cheek! Rubbish for slaves or for women, not for Romans. <sup>look at the god</sup> And the god of the gospel--a common Jew who died like a thief!"

<sup>I see that a good deal of the old Romans + the Nazis</sup> As a Roman, Paul should have completely rewritten the gospel, <sup>and that, as it is</sup> as the Nazis have done. For the beatitude, "Blessed are the meek," he might have substituted Hitler's version, "Happy is he who is always a good comrade; he will make his way in the world." That was Rome's attitude, self-sufficient, powerful. Rome's standard was the eagle; its symbols the axe and the short sword. Not the cross. Rome wanted victory, not sacrifice; power, not meekness.

But Rome listened to Paul as he stood before King Agrippa, for he spoke with the power of a personal encounter with ~~his~~ God ~~at Damascus~~. And Rome listened when he said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel. ~~of Christ,~~

It was that word power, that caught their ears,  
 for it is the power of God unto salvation." ~~With magnificent insight he~~  
~~He~~ described the gospel as power, when he wrote to Rome, <sup>It was good psychology,</sup> for Rome knew what  
 power was, <sup>and worshiped it. Jesus</sup> ~~his~~ legions had conquered the world. But so did Paul, and Rome  
 was soon to see that the power of the gospel was greater than the power of  
 all <sup>its</sup> ~~the imperial~~ legions. Of course Paul was not ashamed. He was a Roman, <sup>(Greece)</sup>  
 and the gospel was the power of God.

But Paul was Greek as well as Roman. He was born and raised  
 in the university town of Tarsus. Even if Paul as a Roman might be excused  
 for glorying in the power of the gospel, Paul the Greek should have been  
 more academically detached. <sup>Eff. 2:11 2:12 B.C. - Archimedes - didn't even look up at drunk soldier -</sup> The Greeks preached <sup>Not to be too far to one side here</sup> moderation, not power. They  
 taught men to choose the golden mean, to walk in the middle of the road; they  
 were cool, critical scientists and philosophers. <sup>self-control</sup> <sup>They worshiped wisdom and truth</sup> But here was Paul, neither  
 moderate nor critical, <sup>wise</sup> ~~burning out his life for what his friends at the~~  
~~university might have called, "a phantom gospel, a myth about a man who died~~  
~~and rose again. Incredible."~~ The Greeks sought after wisdom, and Paul  
<sup>not wisdom, but what he himself admitted was</sup> ~~baldly admitted that he was~~ preaching "the foolishness of the cross." He  
 should have been ashamed of his gospel. More than that, he should have been  
 ashamed of his associates, a bunch of rough, rude, unlettered Galilean  
 fishermen who did not even speak good Greek.

He should have been ashamed, but he wasn't. <sup>not. What was there in the gospel?</sup> Why? The Greeks should have  
~~already~~ knew why. A Greek doctor, named Luke, had written them the strange  
 gripping story of how Paul on the road to Damascus had seen with his own eyes  
 the Risen Lord. <sup>That was why</sup> Christ <sup>Paul had seen Him,</sup> ~~is risen;~~ and on that <sup>rose</sup> ~~glorious historical~~ fact Paul he  
 staked his life and his gospel. He was preaching no pretty theory, no  
 phantom gospel. He was preaching a fact. <sup>the Greeks scientists to the last, liked their facts.</sup> And Paul, who loved truth as  
 Greece had always loved truth, was unashamed.

There is another reason for <sup>Paul's</sup> ~~his~~ Greek pride in the gospel.



The gospel is the wisdom of God. Paul defines it this way to the church in the Greek city of Corinth:

"Now I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which I preached unto you...that Christ died for our sins (according to the scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the scriptures.)"

~~Notice the phrase, "Christ died for our sins."~~ With the word "sin" Paul points to a problem that all the wisdom of the Greeks could not solve, the rock against which the philosophies of the world have shattered one by one. The Greeks, with all their wisdom, could not bring peace to the heart of the guilty sinner, ~~Philosophy, in its own strength, has never yet been able to~~ wash away one bit of the black stain of sin. Is it any wonder that Paul was proud of the gospel, the only answer to the deepest problem man faces, ~~the curse~~ <sup>the problem</sup> of evil in ~~his own~~ human nature? Paul was preaching the blood of Christ, the only cure in the world for sin, and the "foolishness of the cross" was profounder wisdom than the world has ever known. The Greeks worshiped wisdom; <sup>but they were wrestling with the narrow wisdom of men;</sup> Paul was preaching the gospel of the unsearchable riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. Of course he was not ashamed. ~~of it.~~

~~and Roman by right of citizenship, born and bred in a Greek, city,~~

but above all else a Jew--that is Paul, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. <sup>Here we should have had</sup> ~~He got by as a Roman-greek. As a Greek-wisdom. But what excuse has a Jew for proclaiming this gospel.~~  
(Surely of all people Paul the <sup>Pharisee</sup> would fight the gospel to his dying day. He almost did. But one day he went to Damascus.

<sup>Before that,</sup> ~~The gospel had~~ <sup>must have</sup> ~~seemed the height of the ridiculous to him.)~~  
<sup>Messiah, the</sup>  
Imagine telling a Jew that the <sup>Lion</sup> of the Tribe of Judah had come, and that his own people had shamefully crucified him. Imagine telling a Jew that the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace had been this carpenter's son of Nazareth. Paul was more than ashamed of the gospel; he hated it with the red-hot hatred of a fanatic. "You Christians," he raged,

you not only preach a false Messiah, but

^ "you break the Sabbath; you eat like beasts and barbarians without the washings of the law; you laugh at the prayers of the pious; ~~you destroy the sacrifices~~; and make a mockery of the laws and ordinances;" ~~To the Pharisee~~ <sup>and that</sup> ~~This was~~ <sup>is</sup> unforgiveable sin, <sup>in the sight of God and of men.</sup> So Paul went forth to kill and to slay. Then he came to Damascus. Then,

And now <sup>after Damascus,</sup> ~~Paul~~, still boasting that he is a Pharisee of the Pharisees, <sup>Paul</sup> has the effrontery to stand before his brethren and say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." <sup>Paul,</sup> The pride of the theologians, ~~Paul~~, the priests' strong man, <sup>how could he</sup> ~~a prophet in Israel~~, <sup>like that?</sup> deserting to the enemy--can you imagine the consternation when the news fell like a bombshell into the religious circles of Jerusalem?) -Why did he do it?

For the answer we must go with Paul beyond Damascus, into Arabia for three, long, silent years, and see him there poring over the scriptures day after day, and suddenly seeing them as he had never seen them before, illuminated now by the light brighter than the noonday sun, the light he had seen on the <sup>Damascus</sup> road, Jesus Christ, the light of the World. And <sup>a</sup> ~~what~~ fierce joy ~~must have~~ surged through the heart of the young Pharisee as he made the shattering discovery that the <sup>gospel</sup> ~~gospel~~ <sup>did not</sup> ~~destroy~~ the law, but fulfilled it.

<sup>That is what he</sup> ~~See how proudly he proclaims it.~~ <sup>to his fellow countrymen</sup> One phrase he repeats twice in his definition of the gospel, and that phrase, dear to the heart of every Jew, is "according to the scriptures." His God was still the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; his Messiah was the Promised One of the seed of Abraham and the line of David; his gospel was according to the scriptures. Paul the Jew could never be ashamed of the Word of God.

~~Paul was proud of the gospel. But are we? There are still Romans and Greeks and Pharisees in the world today who hide their heads, and creep away like Demas. "Demas hath forsaken me."~~

Yes, Paul was proud of the gospel. But <sup>wasn't that</sup> 2000 years ago? <sup>What do we care about Romans, Greeks or Jews. Yesterday Japanese planes bombed Honolulu.</sup> Does the verse still hold good today? <sup>Never doubt it. The</sup> ~~Word of God is gloriously true in every year and for all years.~~ <sup>Today we are at war. What does Paul have to say to us? I think he would say just what he said to Rome, Greece and Jerusalem:</sup> When Paul ~~said~~, "I am not ashamed of the gospel." He was speaking to the twentieth century as well as to his own, and with those words he answered three questions we must answer most often in our ~~own~~ lives today.

The first is this: Paul, how can I be proud of the gospel when <sup>It can't stop the war, it can't pay any attention to it etc. I'm a little ashamed,</sup> it seems so pathetically ineffective in this power-mad world? <sup>And</sup> Paul says, "Is your world any more drunk with power than was my Rome? Be not ashamed, the gospel is still the power of God." And he is right. Look about you. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation--unto the salvation of 400 men and women a day in India, unto the salvation of 1,000,000 Chinese in <sup>- the gospel is power in the midst of war -</sup> less than four years of war, <sup>^</sup> unto the salvation of the hosts of the redeemed about the earth. The gospel is power.

The second question is this: Paul, isn't the gospel intellectually indefensible? How can I be proud of it in this educated, scientifically-minded world? <sup>I'm a little ashamed to talk about the gospel in our sophisticated Universities.</sup> And Paul answers, "Your world loves wisdom no more than did my Greece, the Greece of Plato, Socrates and Aristotle. Be not ashamed, the gospel is still the wisdom of God." <sup>And he is right.</sup> It was harder for him to stand on Mars Hill and proudly proclaim the gospel to the philosophers of Athens, than it is for us to stand before the wise of our day and preach the cross. <sup>so many of</sup> For now <sup>^</sup> the wise are with us, <sup>not against us.</sup> I heard a Chicago professor, not a Christian, tell his class that the three greatest intellects of all time were Paul of Tarsus, Sir Isaac Newton, and Einstein. I doubt that, but let us take his word for it. Where, then, is intellectual scorn of the gospel. Paul and <sup>Newton, certainly, were not ashamed of it; and listen to this tribute from</sup> Einstein:

"Being a lover of freedom, when the revolution came in Germany I looked to the universities to defend it...but no, the universities

immediately were silenced. Then I looked to the great editors.. but they were silenced in a few short weeks.... Only the church stood squarely across the path of Hitler's campaign for suppressing truth... The church alone has had the courage and persistence to stand for intellectual truth and moral freedom. I am forced to confess that what I once despised I now praise unreservedly."

*you see,*

The gospel, is still the wisdom of God.

And the third question: Paul, I am worried about the Bible.

*You don't realize*

See how it is being battered by critics and scientists. Can I still be proud of the gospel? Paul's answer is wonderfully symoathetic. "I know too well," he says, "the torment of <sup>your</sup> ~~that~~ fear, but what I found on the road to Damascus and in the tents of Arabia you can find today: the gospel is still the Word of God." Paul is right. Our faith <sup>in the Bible</sup> falters either because we do not know the Word, or because we have not seen Him by whose light alone we can understand the Word.

Study in the tents of Arabia with Paul, <sup>with him</sup> ~~but above all else,~~ *study the Bible; but above all,* walk the road to Damascus, look up, and behold the Living Word. Only then will the written Word become God's Word to your heart like a roll of thunder and a flash of lightning from above. Only then will we hear Him say,

"Heaven and earth shall pass away,  
But my word shall not pass away."

Only then can we say, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

I Am Not Ashamed

I think it is true that we find it

~~It~~ <sup>is</sup> sometimes ~~seems~~ <sup>hard</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>us</sup> today to say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel." <sup>for there are deep</sup> <sup>as this.</sup> <sup>sometimes</sup> We are under criticism, and we have become almost supersensitive about the shortcomings and failures of which others point out in the Christianity which we preach. <sup>We tend to be</sup> It has put us on the "defensive," ~~and made us~~ <sup>almost</sup> ~~slightly~~ <sup>apologetic</sup> about our faith. ["Of course I am a Xn," we find ourselves saying, "but really, couldn't Xty have done a little better than it has done?"]

When I find myself in such a mood I like to turn ~~back~~ <sup>back</sup> to the Apostle Paul, Paul the <sup>to hear Paul</sup> ~~Demolisher~~ <sup>Demolisher</sup> <sup>I find new courage for my own convictions as I hear him say with steady faith:</sup> "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Xty," ~~to say~~. But why wasn't he? He had <sup>far</sup> ~~more~~ <sup>excuse</sup> <sup>than we</sup> to be ashamed of it. ~~that~~

Take all three sides of his many-sided genius - the Roman, the Greek, the Jewish - and on every side Paul had <sup>every excuse</sup> ~~good and~~ ~~sufficient~~ reason to be ashamed of ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> ~~Gospel~~ his Xty.

In the first place

He was a Roman, - born a Roman and proud of it. But the Gospel was a ridiculous thing for a Roman to be preaching. <sup>Can't you</sup> <sup>hard</sup> <sup>then</sup> I can imagine ~~and~~ <sup>and</sup> hard old Romans <sup>must have</sup> <sup>flooded</sup> at the soft teachings of this new <sup>Gospel</sup> religion: "Nonsense! - this love and meekness and humility and turning the other cheek .... p. 1.

As a Roman, Paul should have rewritten ... <sup>p. 1</sup> <sup>And the throne of Rome paid caesars - a carpenter's son, a fisherman, a mad young student.</sup> But Rome listened ... <sup>1</sup> He was a Roman, and a Roman loves power, and the Gospel

is the power of God.

But that was 2,000 yrs. ago. ~~Where is the power of the Gospel today? What about today? Where has all the power gone?~~ <sup>still</sup> ~~to the~~ ~~power~~ ~~of~~ ~~God~~, in this Gospel of ours? ~~Can we still look at the Church and be proud?~~ ~~Some say, "No."~~ ~~They have lost the courage of their convictions.~~ I have talked to bewildered + unhappy <sup>they confessed</sup> <sup>was slipping</sup> <sup>from</sup> students whose faith was slipping from them. "Why," I asked. "Because there is no power to Xty," they said. One girl put it very



gospel of the love of <sup>a God in</sup> Jesus Christ. <sup>It has never yet stood the test. It fails - love never fails.</sup> And like Paul, I am not ashamed of that gospel. It is still the power of God.

①  
But is it nonsense? The nonsense, it seems to me, is <sup>in</sup> that caricature of the history of Xty, which, in order to prove that there is no more power to Xty, paints its ~~own~~ history as a short, quick 300 yrs. of early power + expansion, followed by compromise, corruption, and a long and slow decline. ~~In this, the story,~~ Xty is like every religion, <sup>they say,</sup> — an early burst of enthusiasm, then the novelty wears off, disillusion sets in, <sup>reason triumphs + superstition decays.</sup> So with Xty — the glory has departed, the power gone, <sup>the Church with witness away.</sup> Well, that may be true of the other religions, but it is not true of Xty. Our story cannot be written simply as "Golden Age, then Dark Ages + decline," <sup>for Xty, ~~has~~ <sup>it has</sup> within it a secret of renewal + reformation, <sup>+ revival</sup> ~~of transformation~~ <sup>of transformation</sup> that sets it apart from all other faiths, ~~and that has lifted it again + again from apparent defeat to victory.~~ <sup>is titled</sup> "The great Century" is the title of one of the volumes of a recent 7-vol. history of Xty. Which was "the great Century" <sup>of Xty</sup> — the 1st or 2nd or 3rd? <sup>the first, five early years?</sup> Were they the years of power? No, <sup>say let's the</sup> ~~but say~~ Xty's "great Century" of Xty was the 19th — <sup>is</sup> ~~not the~~ years of first enthusiasm, but 1900 years later, <sup>the significance of this</sup> when ~~the~~ <sup>is</sup> To me, this means simply, that Xty stands the test. ~~It is seen, in the power of faith~~ The early years are easy — the years of fresh enthusiasm. But 1900 yrs. later, the rapture of youth is gone, & the way is hard — that is the time of testing. And Xty stands the test.</sup>

But above all, Paul was a Jew, a Pharisee of the Pharisees - and ~~as a Jew~~, Paul the Jew was more than ashamed of the gospel - he hated it with a hot fanaticism that persecuted the Church from Jerusalem to Damascus. But suddenly, all was changed, & Paul begins to preach the very gospel he had hated - that gospel, incredible blasphemy to a Jew, that Jesus <sup>Christ</sup> is Lord, that the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, had been a Carpenter's son of Nazareth. For suddenly he saw by a light brighter than the noonday sun - that his Lord was still the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob.

Here <sup>once + for all</sup> I think we come to the real reason for Paul's <sup>high</sup> courage in the faith, as he discovered that the gospel which he hated was a person whom He could not hate. The gospel is Jesus Christ, the Son of God - and when Paul at last came face to face with this gospel - there was no room for shame, he could only fall down & adore Him, Lord & Master.

And that, too, is how I think the question should come to us, wherever & whenever we are asked to stand for the courage of our convictions. Not - "Are you ashamed of the Church?" Of course I am - <sup>this</sup> often - ~~but~~ I love it, ~~weak & imperfect~~ <sup>as it is</sup>. And not, "Are you ashamed of me?" - <sup>Again,</sup> of course I am - I'm ashamed of myself, <sup>often</sup> over and over again, as I fail to measure up to the standard that is set for me. But that is not the question Paul is answering. The real question, the basic question, "Are you ashamed of the gospel" - comes simply to this, "Are you ashamed of <sup>and</sup> <sup>Christ</sup>?" This is the line of no retreat, here we take our stand - on Jesus Christ <sup>only Son or Lord. How we stand</sup> - or we are no longer His. And even in my moments of deepest doubt and discouragement - that question never comes to me straight, as, ~~are you~~ Am I ashamed of Jesus, "but <sup>it</sup> in some strange way is turned about - for of Him I have no doubt - it turns about - <sup>becomes</sup> Not, "Am I ashamed of Him" - but to "Is he ashamed of me?"



I Am Not Ashamed

I think it is true that we find it

~~It~~ <sup>is</sup> sometimes ~~seems~~ <sup>hard</sup> ~~for us~~ today to say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel." <sup>in these days</sup> ~~as was~~ <sup>as was</sup> We are under criticism, and we have become almost super-sensitive about the shortcomings and failures ~~of~~ which others point out in the Christianity ~~which~~ we preach. <sup>We tend to be</sup> It has ~~put us~~ <sup>put us</sup> on the "defensive," ~~and made us slightly~~ <sup>almost</sup> apologetic about our faith. ["Of course I am a Xn," we find ourselves saying, "but really, couldn't Xty have done a little better than it has done?"]

When I find myself in such a mood I like to turn ~~back~~ <sup>back</sup> to the Apostle Paul, Paul the Damascene. <sup>to help and I find new courage for my own convictions as I hear him say with steady faith:</sup> "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Xty," ~~to say~~.

But why wasn't he? He had <sup>far</sup> more excuse <sup>than we</sup> to be ashamed of it. ~~than we~~

Take all three sides of his many-sided genius - the Roman, the Greek, the Jewish - and on every side Paul had <sup>every excuse</sup> ~~good and~~ sufficient reason to be ashamed of ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> Gospel.

In the first place He was a Roman, - born a Roman and proud of it. But the Gospel was a ridiculous thing for a Roman to be preaching. <sup>Can't you</sup> I can imagine <sup>how these</sup> hard old Romans <sup>must have</sup> ~~plodded~~ <sup>plodded</sup> at the soft teachings of this new <sup>Gospel</sup> religion: "Nonsense! - this love and meekness and humility, and turning the other cheek .... p. 1."

As a Roman, Paul should have <sup>renounced</sup> ~~renounced~~ the Gospel. <sup>And the throne of Rome's proud Caesars - a caesars' son, + filius + a mad young student.</sup> But Rome listened ... <sup>1</sup> He was a Roman, and a Roman loves power, and the Gospel

is the power of God.

But that was 2,000 yrs. ago. ~~Where is the power of the Gospel today? What about today? Where has all the power gone?~~ <sup>still</sup> ~~So that's all the power of God, in this Gospel of ours? Can we still look at the clock and be proud? Some say, "No."~~ <sup>they confessed</sup> They have lost the courage of ~~their~~ <sup>their</sup> convictions. I have talked to bewildered + unhappy ~~or~~ <sup>or</sup> students whose <sup>faith</sup> ~~faith~~ was slipping from them. "Why," I asked. "Because there is no power to Xty," they said. One girl put it very

blindly. "Christians say we must love, and that love is the power to change our hearts & change the world. But now I have learned better. Love is too weak. We must learn to hate. Only hate can ~~change the world & make wrong things right~~ wipe out wrong & change the world."

"Nonsense - this love & weakness & humility." ① →

~~These words are like a modern echo of the creed of ancient Rome. If that creed is right - then she is right - and she is only a modern echo of ancient Rome - then Paul was wrong, and then Rome wrong & Paul was wrong - our faith is vain, & the gospel a which the modern man should be ashamed.~~

~~This is the modern echo of the creed of ancient Rome that challenges our gospel. It doesn't deny that early power is the power of which Paul boasted, but rather wipes it out as the first, spontaneous burst of enthusiasm which can be expected in any new religion. These days, it says, all your power has departed, the power is gone - and what all that is left is a slowly withering organization - the Church which is doomed to die.~~

~~But it is altogether false to paint the history of the Church as a short, quick 300 yrs. of early power & expansion, followed by compromise, corruption & a long slow decline. That is true, perhaps of every other religion in the world where the golden age is only a prelude but it is not true of the Church. Our story cannot be written as Golden Age, Dark Ages & Decline. That is true perhaps of every religion in the world except Christianity. It has had within it a power of renewal & rejuvenation, of revival & transformation that has lifted it again & again from defeat to victory. There is power here. Power to take a course the symbols of defeat, disgrace & death - where else look over the religions of the world where else do you find the Church's "greatest century," says Prof. Lehmann, wherever the religions of the world. Where else do you find them their "great Cent." not in its first few early years, but 1000 years after, the first, five centuries later, when they capture it & they go, & the way you can find. There is the time of testing. And Christianity has stood the test. I am amazed to find Mrs. discouraged & defeated.~~

~~Have we forgotten that the power of gospel is still the power of God - still at work in all its glory, touching as no other power can the heart of man. I was greatly cheered to see this bit of statistics not long ago: - in 1926 there were 6 m. in the young Church - i.e. in the U.S. & N. America. Today in 1948 there were 25 m. - a 4 fold increase. The power of God into Salvation. Of course, there is power in Hitler's Germany. But it has yet to be proved stronger than the power of the~~

But above all, Paul was a Jew, a Pharisee of the Pharisees - and ~~as a Jew~~, Paul the Jew was more than ashamed of the gospel - he hated it with a hot fanaticism that persecuted the Church from Jerusalem to Damascus. But suddenly, all was changed, & Paul begins to preach the very gospel he had hated - that gospel, incredible blasphemy to a Jew, that Jesus <sup>is</sup> Lord, that the mighty God, the Prince of Peace, had been a carpenter's son of Nazareth. <sup>For suddenly he saw by a light brighter than the noonday sun - that His God was still the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob</sup>

Here <sup>me + fall</sup> I think we come to the real reason for Paul's <sup>high</sup> courage in the faith, as life discerned <sup>a</sup> that the gospel which he hated was a person whom He could not hate. The gospel is Jesus Christ, ~~and~~ the Son of God - and when Paul at last came face to face with this gospel - there was no room for shame, he could only fall down & adore Him, Lord & Master.

And that, too, is how I think the question should come to us, wherever & whenever we are asked to stand for the courage of our convictions. Not - "Are you ashamed of the Church?"

Of course I am - often - <sup>this</sup> but I love it, ~~and imperfect this it is~~. And not, "Are you ashamed of me?" - <sup>Again,</sup> of course I am - I'm ashamed of myself, <sup>often</sup> over and over again, as I fail to measure up to the standard that is set for me. But that is not the question Paul is answering. The real question, the basic question, "Are you ashamed of the gospel" - comes simply to this, "Are you ashamed of <sup>and</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>Christ</sup>?" - This is the line of no retreat, Here we take our stand - on Jesus Christ <sup>only Son or God. Here we stand</sup> - or we are no longer ~~in~~. And even in my moments of deepest doubt and discouragement - that question never comes to me straight, ~~is, Am I ashamed of Jesus,~~ <sup>is, Am I ashamed of</sup> but ~~it~~ in some strange way is turned about - for of Him I have no doubt - <sup>+ becomes</sup> it turns about - Not, "Am I ashamed of Him" - but "Is he ashamed of me?"

alternate

~~to the scriptures." His God was still the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; his Messiah was the promised One of the seed of Abraham and the line of David; his gospel was according to the scriptures. No, Paul could not be ashamed of the eternal gospel, the gospel of the Word of God. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."~~

Paul the Roman was not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God; Paul the Greek was not ashamed, for the gospel is the wisdom of God; <sup>Paul the Jew</sup> could never be ashamed of the gospel of the Word of God.

Paul was proud of the gospel. And we--we are afraid to open our mouths about Christ. We like to tell people we are from Princeton, hoping they will think we mean the university and will not press us farther. We are afraid men will class us as hot-under-the-collar Bible students, or naive traditionalists; we are afraid we will look ~~pathetically ineffective in this storm-tossed, power-mad world. We are ashamed of the gospel of Christ.~~

A dramatic story has come to us out of the early days of the Spanish Civil War. When news of the Fascist uprising reached Barcelona factory whistles all over the city began to blow. In the grey dawn, while the street-lights were still burning, one whistle sounded, then another, then a hundred, steadily, mournfully, as in the old days the belfries clamored together in times of peril. Fascist troops were marching on the center of the city. They held the Colon hotel. Two field guns protected the building, and before the guns were soldiers with machine-guns and rifles, sweeping the wide avenue from end to end. As the tumult of the whistles died away, two black Cadillacs, driven by anarchists, zig-zagged madly up the street toward the guns making seventy miles an hour, their horns screaming. Like monstrous torpedoes they

plowed through the line of soldiers, charged the gun crews, piled into a wall beside them in black, blood-spattered heaps of wreckage. Their drivers were dead. But the guns were silenced.

Those men were anarchists. Theirs was a gospel of hate and death. But they were not ashamed of it. They gave their lives for it. We have the gospel of love and life, the gospel of the power and wisdom and word of God. God forbid that we should <sup>hesitate</sup> ~~refuse~~ to say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ."

